



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

## **Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

#### **For Immediate Release**

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### **DOE's Environmental Management Program Requires Public Involvement**

*by Ron Murphree*

*Chair, Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board*

Although the Cold War ended more than 20 years ago, the legacies of radioactive and chemical contamination left behind from a half century of nuclear operations will remain with us far into the future. As a citizen's advisory board, we at the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) would like to share our perspective on the key environment management issues facing DOE Oak Ridge.

To date, DOE Oak Ridge has received \$755 million in Recovery Act funds for environmental cleanup projects at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Y-12, and East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP). The influx of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds has created renewed vigor into the Environmental Management (EM) mission and signaled a long-awaited acceleration to the most aggressive cleanup program in the history of the reservation.

Already the effects of the ARRA funding are visible as cleanup operations at many of the legacy facilities and waste sites are ramping up or are underway.

In addition to the economic stimulus and job creation, accelerating cleanup work on the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) will reduce the landlord costs by millions annually, eliminating the high cost and risks associated with maintaining outdated, deteriorated facilities and legacy grounds.

Footprint reduction will allow the Office of Science and the National Nuclear Security Administration to focus on their missions, enable the ongoing modernization of Y-12 and the national laboratory, and promote future economic sustainability of ETTP as a private sector industrial park.

The current flurry of EM activities on the ORR is just the beginning of the enormous and complex cleanup task that stands before us. Long after the ARRA funding is exhausted, the cleanup of the environmental damage created by past operations will continue to require billions of dollars in future funding, innovative solutions, and persistence to complete. The real challenge will be to maintain the momentum and funding to complete the cleanup efforts and provide for long-term stewardship for generations to come.

Given the magnitude and longevity of the cleanup operations, it is imperative that we remain mindful of our mission and adhere to our most crucial priority, which is protection of public health, now and in the future. As a citizens' advisory board, we ask you, the stakeholders, to join us in our efforts to sustain the awareness and the momentum required to complete the cleanup mission in a timely, safe, and cost-effective manner.

As a member of the community, your active support is essential to ensure adequate, long-term funding for DOE's Oak Ridge EM activities and continued vigilance as DOE pursues its environmental goals. Your vision

and insight can help shape the decisions made today and ultimately the future of the ORR for generations to come.

*ORSSAB meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m., at the DOE Information Center, 475 Oak Ridge Turnpike in Oak Ridge. The public is encouraged to attend, and a period is provided for public comment. For more information, see [www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab](http://www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab).*